

Landlord-Tenant Relations Board
Wednesday, February 5, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

301 King Street
Conference Room 2000
Alexandria, VA 22314

MEMBERS PRESENT: Geraldine Baldwin, Monique Banks, Julia Colby, Christin Damato, Matt Damewood, Meloney Driver, Will Mount, Ramon Venero, and Debra Zusman

STAFF PRESENT: Melodie Seau

GUESTS PRESENT: Monika Jones, Human Rights Commission

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Julia Colby called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ms. Colby asked if Ms. Monika Jones wished to make comments to the Board. Ms. Jones introduced herself as the Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission, noting that the liaison seat on the Human Rights Commission for a Landlord-Tenant Relations Board has been vacant for some time. Ms. Meloney Driver said that she was still interested in the position of liaison to the Human Rights Commission, and that she would apply. Ms. Melodie Seau noted that the Board has already approved Ms. Driver to act as liaison.

Board members introduced themselves to new member Mr. William Mount and welcomed him to the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the December 4, 2013 meeting were approved.

REVIEW OF RELOCATION PLAN LYNHAVEN APARTMENTS:

Ms. Seau and Ramon Venero summarized the December meeting and presentations by with Wesley Housing Development Corporation (WHDC) regarding upcoming renovations and the relocation assistance plan for Lynhaven Apartments. A number of tenants attended the

meeting and Vicente Espinoza from the Office of Housing translated the presentation into Spanish, assisted by Mr. Venero who chaired the meeting.

Ms. Seau said that 100% of the units will be assisted under the Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC) which requires that tax units be occupied by households with certified incomes that do not exceed 60% of the area median income certification. Residents exceeding the maximum incomes will be permanently displaced. Because the project includes funds from the HOME Investments Partnership Program, the relocation must comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA). URA requires much more comprehensive assistance than the City's Voluntary Conversion Assistance Policy, and over-income households will be given relocation assistance which will include replacement housing payments pursuant to URA.

Three types of situations are possible as part of the Lynhaven Apartments Relocation Plan:

1. Permanent On-Site Relocation- The Developer will assume responsibility for costs and the household will agree to permanently relocate to another unit on-site.

2. Temporary On- or Off-Site Relocation - If temporary on- or off-site relocation is necessary WHDC will assume responsibility for reasonable costs directly associated with moving the household for temporary moves.

3. Permanent Off-Site Relocation

Households that are over income or those that exceed occupancy restrictions will be displaced. Eligible displaced households will be entitled to advisory services, a Residential Moving Expense Payment and a Replacement Housing Payment.

Replacement housing payments will be made to permanently displaced households. These payments provide for the difference between the rent paid and the rent for a comparable unit for 42 months. The payment cannot exceed \$5,250.

Mr. Mount said that although the developer would be paying for the cost of relocation, he believed that the tenants would lose wages and be greatly inconvenienced by the move. He suggested that some compensation should be offered to the tenant for the inconvenience.

Ms. Seau said that the City's guidelines are voluntary and that the developer, a nonprofit is providing assistance well in excess of what the City asks of property owners causing tenant displacement. Ms. Seau reviewed the City's limitations on enforcement and regulation of private property. She noted that the Dillon Rule requires that all Virginia jurisdictions be specifically enabled to enact ordinances that regulate private property. Mr. Mount and the Board discussed the City's role in proposing legislation, and will explore potential recommendations during the year prior to the next session of the Virginia General Assembly.

Ms. Debra Zusman moved to approve the Lynhaven Relocation Plan with Mr. Venero seconding the motion. All members voted to approve the plan with the exception of Mr. Mount, who voted "present."

APARTMENT MANAGERS' SEMINAR

Ms. Seau said that Virginia regulations require that any person in the business of selling or renting dwellings be certified for completing Fair Housing Training every two years. The City has sponsored the state training which is conducted by Mally Dryden Mason, consumer education coordinator and fair housing training specialist. However, it has been several years since the City has offered this training. Ms. Seau said that she had contacted Ms. Mason, and that she would be available on March 20. Ms. Seau suggested that the Board sponsor this training as the FY2014 Apartment Managers' Seminar. After discussion the Board approved the staff recommendation.

Ms. Seau asked if any landlord members would be able to provide refreshments. This had been done previously by Cindy Clare, but Ms. Clare was no longer on the Board due to term limits. Ms. Driver and Matt Damewood agreed to sponsor refreshments for the event.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Seau said that the Office of Housing has hired Caridad Palerm to oversee the implementation of the Tenant Assistance and Relocation Assistance Plan for the Beauregard Small Area Plan redevelopment. Ms. Palerm is a bi-lingual attorney who is licensed to practice law in Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. She was formerly the director of Buyers and Renters of Arlington County Voice (BRAVO), and worked with the County in the relocation of residents displaced by the redevelopment of the Buckingham area of Arlington. Previously Ms. Palerm was Deputy Administrator in the Administration for the Revitalization of Communities in Puerto Rico. Among other duties in that position, Ms. Palerm managed the relocation of families in a 100 year old community which was redeveloped by the municipal government.

In response to questions from Mr. Mount and other members of the Board, Ms. Seau said that she would email links to information for the Beauregard Small Area Plan to Board members.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.